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THE SOCIALIST AGENDA FOR BETTER INDIA

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Abstract:

The end of British colonial rule gave a new dimension of self-rule. After a long period of colonial rule, India was forced to prepare itself for self-government and achieve the goals of Swaraj. In a situation where the nature of India's next government and its agenda had to be decided, many prominent Indian political leaders took on the key responsibility of shaping India. The Constituent Assembly had to handle the main responsibility of formulating fundamental principles of Indian government and implementing it, respecting and deciding the principles of the constitution so that the self-government of the people would get real meaning and democratic principles. Indian socialists believe, political equality cannot be achieved unless the economic and social inequality in India is corrected. Leaders like M N Roy portrayed that the adoption of socialist principles as the only way to end India's inequality. He was influenced by the socialist movements that had succeeded in the Western societies. And later socialists like M N Roy and other members of the Constituent Assembly succeeded in incorporating socialist positions and agendas in the constitution which provided a vision for the governance of India. But even today India is not being able to achieve the goal of equal society is heard everywhere. Therefore, this article of mine shades light on where the socialist agenda that is committed to building a better India stumbled upon and also tries to analyze the limitations of Socialism.

Keywords: *Socialism, Agenda, Constituent Assembly, Swaraj, Equality.*

INTRODUCTION

The 19th century was an important phase for the development of socialism in India. The principles of freedom, equality, classlessness freed from the exploitation of capitalists in the western countries were complemented by the egalitarianism of Karl Marx. It is aimed at social, economic equality, non-discrimination on the basis

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of caste, sex, creed, religion and language under social equality with the right that all have and should have equal status and opportunities. The philosophy behind it was to provide a decent standard of living for all through equal distribution of wealth. Such factors influenced many Indian political scholars and intellectuals. At the same time, the condition of Indian society was very deplorable. Inheritance, landlords, exploited the peasant working class. The question of compensating for such a situation where the caste system has overcompensated the class conflicts. Many political scholars were of the opinion that the introduction of socialism was appropriate for the socio-economic equality of India as the educational background and foundation was western model and they lived in western countries for the purpose of education. Colonial consciousness also endorsed this opinion.

SOCIAL CONTEXT OF INDIA AND RELEVANCE OF SOCIALIST PRINCIPLES

The American Revolution Declaration of 1776[1] all men are created equal", the French Revolution of 1789 Liberty, Equality, Fraternity, as well as the Russian Revolution of 1917 "work according to ability shall receive according to need". Inspired by the famous slogans, Nehru tried to implement the 'model of socialism' which was suitable for the situation of India, in the background of achieving the desire of an equal society by eliminating inequality in the society. Members of the Constituent Assembly K. Tishaw, Brajeshwar, M. N Roy, Nehru and others discussed what socio-economic issues should be included for the construction of a better India and by including the principles of socialism in the "Directive Principles of State Policy" in the fourth part of the constitution, In a complex situation when everyone had to live together in India with different caste, religion, race, language and culture. Buddha’s philosophy of Shanti, Basavanna's principle of equality, Kanakadasa's casteless system, Gandhi's swaraj principles, as well as slogans of Sanatana Dharma like ‘*Sarvejano SukhinoBhavantu*’ and ‘*Vasudaiva Kudumbakam*’ in Vedapanishads were influential. The dilemma of not being fully freed from such conservative Sanatan principles and not fully incorporating Western ideals, after these difficulties in the deliberations of the Constituent Assembly, an attempt was made to include India-style socialism in many parts of it, including the Constitution proposal. Eliminating social inequalities through socialism and "rebuilding society for prosperity". Creating an agenda to make India a "Sukhiraj,"[2] socialist principles came into being to correct the mindsets in the society facing evils such as serfdom, untouchability, caste and class conflicts, abuse of women and children, violence etc

[1]*Political Thought of India.* (2014). Karnataka State Open University. Pp. 8-13

[2]*The constitution of India*. (2023, November 6).

THE CONSTITUTION AND THE SOCIALIST AGENDA

When we look at the history of India, we see injustice, inequality, exploitation. The main reason for this was the caste system in India and the absence of moral codes to guide and control the ruling class and the laws they made. These factors were in the interest of the ruler and not the ruled. But the intellectual revolution that took place in Europe during the Middle Ages, as a result of the thoughts of thinkers and their writings, the concepts of liberty, equality, fraternity, etc., became popular with the people, the people revolted against the ruling elites. As a result of such revolutions, democratic principled governments came into existence; many countries became independent from the imperial system and colonial system, and established self-governments. Countries like America, Russia also became independent. Countries like India also became independent Global changes from 1600 to 1947 affected India.[3]This was a prelude to the freedom movement, before India became independent, the Constituent Assembly held many meetings starting on December 9, 1946, and held many meetings on November 26, 1949, followed by many more meetings, and adopted the Constitution of India on November 26, 1949. Then on January 26, 1950, the Constitution was dedicated to Indians and many social, political, economic and cultural factors are included for the upliftment of the society.

But when the British ruled the rich India and drained it, the Indians ended the colonial rule. India was drained of its wealth by succumbing to the imperialist attitude of the British Empire. This led to further inequality and atrocities. Ironically, the Constituent Assembly was faced with the need for India to follow the Western model to end inequality and atrocities in India. Along with the development of western education, literature and scientific spirit in India, the social conditions of India i.e. existence of feudal system, zamindari rule, land ownership system, lack of necessities, and standard of living of the people were chaotic. Also, there are many castes in Indian society. Except for Brahmins, all the other castes were seen as lower castes, the peasant class through land ownership, laborers working long hours and not paid proper wages, concentration of wealth, hunger, poverty, unemployment, lack of priority for the backward classes and the cry of inequality was high. These factors forced the need for the implementation of Western model principles. All these became a pressing problem for Indian philosophers, thinkers and scholars. Nehru was influenced by "principles of equality" "socialist stances" such as Roy, Nehru, Lohia, Virendranath, Nalanigupta, Palmedatta, AmitaDange became more interested in the principles of socialism when there were discussions about what

[3]*Political Thought of India.* (2014). Karnataka State Open University. Pp. 8-13

policies or laws should be implemented to fix the Indian system in the future. K T Shah and Brajeshwar demanded that socialist principles be included in the preamble of the constitution.[4] But B R Ambedkar aspired to incorporate it in the policy guidelines of the state because it should be in accordance with the times.[5] He expressed the opinion that this will have to be decided by the next Parliament and the people.

Welfare insisted on the use of socialist elements to fulfill the concept of the state. In the midst of all these debates, in 1976,[6] in order to gain recognition among the masses to retain power, Indira Gandhi adopted slogans like "GaribiHatao" (Elimination of Poverty) in a socialist stance to address the hardships of the poor and redefined "Sovereign Democratic Republic" as "Sovereign Socialist Secular Democratic Republic" through the 42nd Amendment. .Socialism is a political economic system which represents the role of the state in the means of production, distribution and exchange. Its core is to end exploitation and inequality in society and provide socio-economic justice.

A separate chapter has been framed in the Constitution of India for the "Directive Principles" on socialist measures. Socialist principles aim at establishing a "welfare state" and guide the state to achieve them. Also, when any government comes to power, they urge the governments to keep these things in mind and lead the state.

Article 36 to Article 51 in Part IV of the Constitution of India contains the Directive Principles of State Policy. It was borrowed from the Irish Constitution. It includes Gandhian principles, liberal principles, and socialist principles. These are aimed at socio-economic justice. Governments accordingly formulate a code of conduct to carry out their responsibilities. These include legal measures, government policies, guiding principles, ideal aspirations of the people. Central and State Governments should pay special attention while enacting laws and formulating policies. Here the principle of DPSP is not enforceable by any courts but these are fundamental aspects of governance of the country. These DPSP are classified based on their basic theoretical purpose. Namely, Article 38 states that socialist principles eliminate inequality in income and opportunities by achieving social, economic and political justice. It aims to achieve public welfare by securing and protecting social life.

. Article 39 states that the State shall specifically direct its policies such as adequate livelihood for all citizens, ownership and control of resources in such a way as to serve the common good, which avoids concentration of wealth. Equal pay for equal work for both men

[4]Singh, R. (2022, September 4). The history and debates about ‘socialist’ and ‘secular’ in the preamble of the Constitution. *The Indian Express*.

[5]Fatangare, G. (2020, September 13). Socialism and Secularism: Controversy over the Preamble of the Constitution - Indian Law Portal. *Indian Law Portal*.

[6] ibid.

and women, protection of workers' strength and health, abolition of child labour.

Article 41 provides for right to work, right to education, provision of public assistance in case of unemployment, old age, and disability. Article 42 provides for just humane working conditions and maternity relief.[7] Article 43 aims to provide wages and a better standard of living to all workers. 43 A ascertains the role of labor in industrial management. Article 47 provides for improving the standard of living of the people, improving nutrition and improving public health as well as providing cultural opportunities.

ARE THE HOPES OF SOCIALISM FULFILLED?

Keeping the hope of building a better India on the foundation of such socialist elements, the principles formulated by the members of the Constitution Drafting Committee, what has India achieved in 75 years of independence, does not arise interesting questions. Today is the need to put them in the background and introspect. When the pros and cons of socialism are analyzed objectively, what can be observed is that these previous studies have proved that socialist principles are too idealistic in principle and their practical implementation is fraught with many difficulties. A natural question to ask here is where socialist principles are stumbling in India. If there are implementation errors in their philosophy or in their implementation, they can be compensated in a couple of times of trial and error, but if there are errors in conception of welfare itself, it needs serious thought. There are explanations that the socialists of India, aware of the core of its philosophy in the context of association with Western societies and the colonial consciousness, aimed to use Western solutions as cure for India's problems. The egalitarian system lacked the incentive to act on socialism in state institutions. Critics of the neoclassical school of economics criticize state-ownership and the centrality of capital for this reason.

[8]Social inequality is created in society because there is no private intervention in property and business. This leads to a two-tiered society. Here the elite get all the benefits and the common people are deprived of the benefits. There are criticisms that socialism does not encourage citizens to work hard and engage in new types of work, whether in business for the private sector or for personal achievement, which lacks economic growth.Socialism should continue on the path of equal distribution of wealth and resources but there are explanations that political intrigues that follow the principle of centralization

[7] Singh, R. (2022, September 4). The history and debates about 'socialist' and 'secular' in the preamble of the Constitution. *The Indian Express*.

[8] *Defining the goals of socialism: what it means for the people*. (2022, May 26). Unacademy.

rather than decentralization lead to the unhealthy development of socialism.

Basic needs are said to be met by pure socialism. Its aim is to provide basic needs like food, shelter, education, health protection and employment without any discrimination but the socialistic elements are not seen in the provision of infrastructure, unemployment is increasing day by day, feeding of adulterated food, the medical field which works on profit no matter how much grant is received, all these are common to increase inequality instead of equality which are socialistic elements.

CONCLUSION

"Socialism is good in theory but not visible in practice". In the effort to build a better India, an economic system that has many built-in flaws needs to adapt agendas to suit India's situation. Theoretically socialism is good but its achievement is not seen in the long run because social inequality is massively built into the society. The rich are getting all the benefits through inheritance. The masses are again disenfranchised where the government fails to act in favor of the people. The socialist principles that have shaped the aspirations of the people in Western countries are not working properly in India. And if not relevant to contemporary issues. They lead us to expect an answer to the very natural question of whether the Indian experience is lacking. Some scholars are of the view that it is clear that these western philosophical ideas do not have the characteristic of being applicable to the Indian context. Contradictions such as these are universal ideals of ideologies that consider the nature of local society and cast doubt on their practical implementation in such complex society. and create ambiguity and confusion. If the socialist position had been clearly felt by the Indian masses, they would have known its intentions. This paper finds the need for studies in this field with the view that the agenda would not have failed for which institutions were found to be the solution.

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